



2300 Lake Elmo Drive
Billings, MT 59105

NOTICE OF DECISION

April 25, 2005

TO: Environmental Quality Council
Director's Office, Dept. of Environmental Quality*
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

Director's Office	Lands Section
Parks Division	Design & Construction
Fisheries Division	Legal Unit
Wildlife Division	Regional Supervisors

Mike Volesky, Governor's Office
Sarah Elliott, Press Agent, Governor's Office*
Montana Historical Society, State Preservation Office
Janet Ellis, Montana Audubon Council
Montana Wildlife Federation
Montana State Library*
George Ochenski
Montana Environmental Information Center
Wayne Hirst, Montana State Parks Foundation
FWP Commissioner Shane Colton
Bob Raney
Sharon Moore, DNRC Area Manager, Southern Land Office
Other Local Interested People or Groups
* (Sent electronically)

Ladies and Gentlemen:

A Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) was prepared for Lake Elmo State Park, Billings, Montana. The draft EA was circulated for 30 days and legal notices were published on Montana's electronic bulletin board, the Billings Gazette and the Helena Independent Record. We received fourteen comments in writing and one phone call commenting on this project. Five interested parties attended the public meeting held on April 22nd.

The department has decided to proceed with the project as described in the Environmental Assessment.

This project is subject to appeal, which must be submitted to the FWP Director in writing, and postmarked within 30 days of the date on this decision notice. The appeal must specifically describe the basis for the appeal, explain how the appellant has previously commented to the department or participated in the decision-making process, and lay out how FWP might address the concerns in the appeal. If you have questions regarding this decision notice, please send e-mails to hnyberg@mt.gov or call me at 247-2951.

Sincerely,

Harvey E. Nyberg
Regional Supervisor

LAKE ELMO EA COMMENT SUMMARY

Fourteen comments were received regarding the Lake Elmo State Park. One comment was received by telephone, twelve comments electronically, and one by mail. Of the fourteen comments, eleven were in support, two were in opposition as to how the trail is to be developed, and one commented on an area not addressed in the project.

Commenters A – K were in support of the improvements for the following reasons:

Improvements are generally needed. The dog park is needed in the Billings area. One commenter would like to see enforcement of vaccinations. One commenter was concerned that trail grant money may be expended on work not related to the trails.

Response: The dog park will have rules and regulations for use, included in those will be that dogs must have current vaccinations. Users will be on the honor system for monitoring this issue. Monies received for trail grants are strictly guided and cannot be used on any projects outside of trail development or renovation.

Commenters L and M raised the objections that the trail renovation should not include a crushed stone surface; they felt that the bark surface is a more user-friendly running surface.

Response:

The crushed gravel has more capabilities as a multi-use surface, and if installed correctly can meet ADA guidelines. Crushed gravel is considered to be a better running surface than concrete or asphalt; it is, however, not as runner friendly as bark or grass.

Commenter N would like to see a year round restroom installed near Roger's Pier.

Response: This was not called for in the plan. Discussion needs to be held on possibly making a portable toilet available in the off-season.